

Reflect In This Heart Of Mine by gala_apples

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Summary:

So maybe Dustin opens a door without calling first. Who could have possibly anticipated what he'd find?

Reflect In This Heart Of Mine

Author's Note:

I did some research about the 1990's genderfluid scene, and tried my best to use that knowledge rather than current day culture. Dustin doesn't know anything about the culture, but he tries his best to support Mike. Please think about whether less than perfect gender spectrum attitudes is something you can handle reading.

written for the 'mirrors' prompt at seasonsofkink.

Dustin's had a key to Steve and Nancy and Jonathan's house for years now. Pretty much ever since he could prove he could pretend to believe in the polite fiction that the three of them aren't in an ever-mutating, on again, off again, weird *thing*. He doesn't ask who's dating who this week, and in exchange he gets to drop by without invitation to fuck around with one of Steve's baker's dozen of guitars, the kind of luxury shit you can afford when there are three incomes in one household. Today though, it isn't even about a relaxing jam sesh. It's about checking up on Mike. Even before Cassidy's lawyer bequeathed him a manila folder full of divorce papers and a demand for full custody of Charlie, he'd moved into his sister's spare bedroom. A milestone setback like that can be depressing, so Dustin and The Wives and the Sinclairs have an undocumented rotation to make sure he's not getting too in his own head. Will would too, if he was in Indiana, but the talented fuck is currently on tour, so.

If he called, Mike would tell him not to come over. He knows Mike would, and then he'd lay in bed all day, stewing in a bath of dust mites. Dustin's made a pact with the others to not take no for an answer. Seeing as he's the only one with his own key, instead of having to find the spare hanging on the notch in one of the shed posts, he just walks right in. He doesn't even have to fuck with the knob; the bedroom door's unlocked.

Mike is in his bedroom. Mike's alone, standing in front of the guest room's full length mirror, looking at himself. Mike's in a greyish

purple dress that fits snugly against his torso before flaring out at the hips. It's one of those dresses that when you twirl the skirt flies out to flash underwear. Marilyn Monroe-esque, you could say. The style probably has a name, but given the type of women he spends time with most frequently, it's never come up. Both of the Wives are pretty butch; Jane in a stylish, slick way, Max so comfort-first she had to be talked out of wearing a t-shirt and jeans to her wedding. Erica doesn't care about fashion either. Nancy does, but Dustin interacts with her the least of the three in this communal house.

Dustin's choices narrow to leave and act like he never saw anything, or stay. It's a pretty easy choice. Since when the fuck has he ever turned his back on a complicated situation, if it involves friends? He closes the door behind him and sits on the desk chair, a lovely carved maple wood item, because as it turns out, Jonathan has a great eye for interior decoration when he can be convinced it's not a frivolous thing to spend money on. Growing up poor deeply embeds worries like that.

"I'll sit until dawn if I have to," he says. It's not a threat. Or if it is, it's one built on a foundation of support and love, and if Dustin's totally honest with himself, curiosity. Many of the things Mike does become even more interesting when he explains them. This'll likely be the same.

Finally Mike opens his mouth. "It's not crossdressing."

"Okay?" It looks like crossdressing for fun and profit to Dustin, but what does he know?

"God, this conversation would be so much easier with Will. Or not at all. Don't suppose you want to fuck off?"

Dustin snorts. Un-fucking-likely.

"Okay. Listen." Mike draws away from his reflection, moving to prop himself on the edge of the desk. His skirt rides up and Dustin gets a sudden look at the line of his thigh. It's mesmerizing, but he knows better than to say so.

"Here's a basic rundown. Drag is when guys dress like women in a

super over the top way. Crossdressing is when guys dress like femme women. What I'm doing is dressing up. I'm genderqueer okay? I'm genderqueer and I like goddamn jeans. I can sit on the floor with Charlie in jeans, I don't have to worry about staircases, and my legs don't get cold. Like ninety percent of the time, no matter what gender I am, I want to wear jeans. But sometimes I like dressing up. Sometimes a guy wants to look dapper, sometimes a woman wants to look stunning."

"Is that why Cassidy divorced you?" He knows it's the wrong thing to say as soon as it comes out of his mouth, but Mike still won't tell him beyond 'a lot of reasons'. He's curious, goddamnit. And maybe he wants to get Mike back for the Will comment, a little. Seeing as he's twenty six and still feeling the same shit that he did when he was twelve, Dustin's pretty sure that's a sore spot that will never scab over.

"Why, for being fancy? You'd think that Cassidy, nay, all the Simpsons would appreciate ostentatiousness."

"No, the genderqueer thing."

Dustin's pretty sure he's hit the nail on the head when Mike changes the topic. "Do you think I look good in this? If you know, you might as well give me opinions."

Dustin looks at him again. Her, probably, though he feels weird asking. Thanks to Dart when he was in junior high, he spent most of high school with a biology obsession. He can name a dozen hermaphrodite animals, and what environmental causes might prompt a gender change, but he doesn't know a thing about human causes. Well, unless Mike tells him otherwise, he's going to assume female outfit means female. And as for the dress? Dustin likes it. He likes it more than he probably should, considering Mike's never shown an iota of interest in him, that way. The dress has been tailored to fit across her flat chest, and the colour contrasts well against the tattoos on her bare arms.

"You look hot," Dustin replies simply. It's the safest answer, as far as any of this can be safe.

“You really think-”

“Has no one told you this shit before? Gender spectrum or no, your ass is bangin.”

Mike surges forwards, almost diving off the edge of the desk in her haste. Dustin has just enough time to see the sheen of lip gloss before her lips are against his. Her mouth tastes like gum, which Dustin happens to know is a nervous habit of Mike's. Either he was stressed before this, and transforming is an outlet, or there's something in this that unsettled him. Her. At what point in a transformation do you start using new pronouns?

For all that Mike initiated this, she sure seems stunned when she pulls away, sits back upright. Maybe she thought he'd pull away out of some straight boy horror? Not that that even makes sense, since she's a she right now.

“You don't mind the...”

Dustin makes an executive decision to purposely misunderstand. At this point they can either have a conversation about feelings, or get back on the road to kissing. He's certain that the two are mutually exclusive, Mike being a pensive soul. And honestly, now that he knows they can talk about this whenever. There's no telling when kissing will be taken off the table. Dustin's gonna take what he can when he can, get himself some new ingredients for the crush soup that's been on low simmer for the last decade. “What, you being in fancy dress? Didn't you notice me hooking up at The Wives' wedding? And yours? I'm all about the suit kink. Well, suits and banana hammocks. Love that spandexy peen.”

“Jesus,” Mike groans, half laughing. “If that's what you're going to say, shut up and more kissing.”

“I promise I won't wrinkle you. That just wouldn't do.”

“You are a gentleman, Dustin Henderson.”

This time they stand to kiss. Dustin rests his hands lightly on Mike's hips, as promised light enough to not injure the fabric. Mike's a bit

taller than he is, so she angles her head down. Dustin knows it's serious when tongues get added to the equation. It's everything a confused little bisexual boy could want, happening to a man confident enough to know how to continue the pleasure.

Well, mostly. An important part is knowing what your partner wants. Dustin's a fuckin feminist, he knows men who aren't grody give women choices.

"Mike, do you want to take this further?" Dustin asks, prepared to hear a no. If Mike's really into how she looks now, maybe she doesn't want the reminder of the boy stuff underneath.

"Fuck me against the mirror."

Or there's that. Kind of a wildly different ballpark than Dustin was expecting, but he's damned if he's not going to suit up. Metaphorically. Literally, Dustin's got his clothes off in about ten seconds. He also makes sure to lock the guest room door. The 'walking in on something shocking turns into sex' trick only works once. As much as Dustin would probably have a friendly threesome with basically any of his friends, he doubts that Mike is as slutty as he is. Besides, what if it's Nancy?

"Do you have stuff? You know, lube?" As a proud bisexual man, Dustin does. At home. It's not like he could possibly have foreseen needing it today. There's no question that Steve and Jonathan's rooms will both have some, but again, that might be too close of an association to Nancy's sex life for Mike's comfort. At this point the divorce depression must be her only blinders left. Knowing Steve like he does, there's no way the guy decided to take a vow of celibacy for as long as Mike was bunking with.

"Yeah," Mike says, easily wiping out the dilemma Dustin was building in his head.

Dustin's never fucked someone facing a mirror before. It's an interesting experience. With his right arm curled around Mike's pelvis, holding her close to him, his left is free to brace against the ornately carved frame. It keeps his body far enough away from the mirror that he can see every one of Mike's expressions reflected back

at him. Sure he's had missionary position sex before, lots of times. It's kind of the standard when it comes to quasi-romantic, kissing the whole time love making. This is different. Fucking back to chest usually provides a modicum of privacy, the chance to not censor yourself. It means you don't have to worry how stupid your o-face is, because your partner's not going to see it anyway. Like Dustin, Mike's had enough so for that lesson to sink in. Enough so that in a chest to back, but still face to face position, she doesn't tame her expressions. Dustin's not saying he's going to memorize the particularly memorable twitches to jerk off to later, but he totally is.

Of course, there's the possibility that it's not facial body memory for Mike. Maybe she's just got other things on her mind. The braced position might be far enough back that Dustin can see faces, but it's also far enough that Mike can get a glimpse of herself getting fucked in a dress. For all Dustin knows, this is the first time she's had this opportunity. There's got to be something affirming about it, like the first time Dustin found another boy who wanted to kiss boys. Rich self esteem or not, sometimes a person just wants to get confirmation from others that what's happening is fine. Great, even.

Turns out dirty talk when fucking a friend is impossible. Dustin's usually quite a talker, a describer of the situation of the highest order, but not today. Every time he goes to open his mouth and let something filthy fall out, all he can imagine is Mike straight up laughing, or bringing it up during a commercial and snickering two weeks from now. The most he can manage is repeating different variations of *look at you, just look at you*. It's what Mike wants to hear the most, anyway.

Dustin knows Mike's close to orgasm, not by the tension in her body, or her breathing picking up, but by the way her upper half drops forwards. Forehead braced on the slick glass, her breath starts to fog up the mirror. Knowing how much Mike wants to see herself, she'd only do it for one reason. In a quick gesture of being the best lover - and friend- he can be, Dustin hauls Mike back up, tight against his chest, and takes a few steps back. It's a lot of loose weight to hold up, but it worth it to see Mike in all her glory, for Mike to see herself in all her glory, skirt dampening and turning darker with her come.

Dustin finishes soon after. He's straining to hold Mike from her post

orgasm slump, and his grip briefly gets too tight as he goes through his own orgasmic tension. And then he loses his own control, and they're both tumbling to the floor, soft teal carpet breaking their fall.

"Can't say this was what I expected to happen today," Dustin jokes almost immediately. His breathing is still more like panting, which dampens effective communication, but there's nothing he hates more than walks of shame. If the room is awkward post sex that's just proof you didn't have sex with the right person, in Dustin's book. He's not going to allow things to be awkward with a friend he's had for a decade and a half.

"Yeah, I guess," is Mike's answer, as she pulls her skirt back down over her thighs.

"I was just going to harass you until you played Super Mario Kart with me. Which, hey, we can still do. You might just want to put on a new dress first?"

Mike ignores the fluids comment entirely, focused too hard on her secrecy issues to handle an easy suggestion. "The SNES is in the living room. I don't know when they're getting home."

"Look, if you want to keep it a secret or whatever, that's your choice. I'm just saying, you're hardly the first on the alternative lifestyles train. Will and Erica are like our token straights. If one of those three tries to make a big deal about it, they're fuckin' assholes. And come on, the living room has all the natural light. Don't you want to see what you look like in the sunshine?"

Mike is hesitant, but Dustin knows he has her on the hook. He'll try one more time, one more temptation. "Your old house was all wood panelling and built-ins. Have you ever seen yourself being lovely in the sun? Because I think it'll make you happy. And isn't that why you divorced her? So you could be happy?"

"She divorced me."

Statements like that are pretty much compilations of every trait of Mike's Dustin hates. Tendency to doom and gloom, putting shit on pedestals, stubbornness. "We've *all* talked to you about this. That shit

was mutual. You hate her too, you're just nostalgic. Whatever, moving on for now. Look, do you want me to hold your hand? I'm not being sarcastic here. If you'll feel safer, I absolutely the fuck will."

It might be one of Dustin's proudest moments to date when Mike reaches out and takes his hand. The walk down the hall is silent, the strength of Mike's grip saying everything. But she does it. She sits in front of the television as brave as can be while Dustin puts the cartridge in the SNES so the game can load. It's not quite twirling with the curtains open, sunlight streaming over her, but Dustin will take it.

Not that it lasts long. They get through one track, Donut Plains, playing Toad and Koopa Troopa, before a car pulls up outside the house and several doors slam all at once. The noise, and what it means, causes Mike to bolt. She runs for her room as fast as she can without even a word to Dustin. Lucky for her, he's the kind of friend that knows how to back someone's play. He scrambles to pull the second controller out of the SNES and make it look like he's doing single player, once again mooching off Steve's expensive and cool shit. For all that Steve and Nancy know, he has no idea if Mike's even in the house.

As for the long term plan? He'll leave it alone for now. One thing Dustin's learned about the Wheelers, they need to be completely and utterly demolished when they're wrong but won't see it. They're so fucking bullheaded that it takes endless firm shoving to make things happen. Dustin will do some research, maybe contact Kali and find out what the cutting edge cool Chicago opinions on gender are, and he'll use facts to add to the undercurrent. By December Mike will be tailoring a festive velvet dress for Christmas Eve. If she's in a she mood, of course.